

# Rev Fr Maurice de Meulemeester, C.S.S.R. (1879-1961)

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Father de Meulemeester, who may be noted as a Necrologist *par excellence*, was born at Ghent, Flanders, on 30 June 1879. He was ordained to the diocesan priesthood in 1902 but quickly entered the Redemptorists and was professed in 1906. He soon became a professor of Church History and later General Archivist and director of the Redemptorist Historical Institute. He was also Provincial Archivist of the Belgium Province and director of the Redemptorist Oblates.

Father was a priest of great quality and a first class religious. After brilliant studies in Ghent and his ordination, he was private tutor to the Ghellinck Vaernewyck family who retained a devoted attachment to him until the end of his days, something he found a precious comfort.

Father de Meulemeester distinguished himself by an incessant spirit of work. Until his final days he was always glued to his desk where he composed a great number of biographies and histories of various religious congregations

As Archivist General he was very competent and composed a book on the origins of the Redemptorists and a monumental "General Bibliography of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer." He also produced a very large number of choice articles for various historical reviews. The characteristic value of these studies was their objectivity. Father maintained an intransigent cult of the truth. He took for himself, and admitted also, no liberties with his subject. He sacrificed all to the truth and reserved no monopoly of truth to himself. He respected the historical opinions of others but he disclosed to no one his personal opinion neither would he let it be betrayed for any motive.

He was much focused on God. Of a very delicate conscience he lived through some painful spiritual periods but in the evening of his life he found great peace – the reward of the soul who had never doubted the infinite goodness of Our Lord.

He loved to immerse himself in prayer and had a marked taste for the contemplative life. All this, rather than stiling his active apostolate – which he exercised by many and long years of preaching – rather deepened and supernaturalized them. An example here would be his book "O My God, Trinity Whom I Adore," an admirable commentary on the prayer of Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity.

Very attached to the traditions of his Order, he was most fervent at his Mass and Breviary, while cultivating a deep filial piety towards Our Blessed Lady. He desired to die on a day consecrated to Her, and it was indeed on a Saturday the She came to "pick" him for the Heavenly Garden while the *Magnificat* was being recited around his deathbed. This occurred at the Institute of Our Lady of the Presentation in Beveren (Wavre), Belgium on 15 April 1961. †



Rev. Fr Maurice  
De Meulemeester, C.S.S.R.



Fr De Meulemeester with one of his  
manuscripts.

(After a memorial card)